

Message Text

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SUBJECT: APARTHEID COMMITTEE PROTEST

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF APARTHEID COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN CISSE'S
OF APRIL 16, TO GOVERNOR SCRANTON CONCERNING INCIDENTS AT
HEINEMANN ELECTRIC (SA) OF SOUTH AFRICA:

QTE

SIR,

THE ATTENTION OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE HAS BEEN DRAWN TO GRAVE
INCIDENTS AT THE HEINEMANN ELECTRIC (SA) IN SOUTH AFRICA, A
SUBSIDIARY OF HEINEMANN ELECTRIC COMPANY OF TRENTON, NEW
JERSEY.

IN VIOLATION OF ELEMENTARY TRADE UNION RIGHTS, THE MANAGEMENT
OF THE COMPANY DISMISSED ALL THE AFRICAN WORKERS FOR DEMANDING
RECOGNITION FOR THEIR TRADE UNION. IT, HOWEVER, CALLED IN THE
POLICE OF THE RACIST REGIME WHO ATTACKED THE WORKERS,
WITHOUT PROVOCATION, CAUSING SERIOUS INJURIES TO MANY MEN
AND WOMEN. SEVERAL WORKERS HAVE BEEN CHARGED IN THE COURTS
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UNDER RACIST AND REPRESSIVE LAWS. I ENCLOSE A NOTE SUMMARIZING

THE DEVELOPMENTS.

THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE HAS EXPRESSED ITS GRAVE CONCERN AND INDIGNATION AT THESE DEVELOPMENTS.

IT HAS ASKED ME TO CONVEY TO YOUR EXCELLENCY ITS EARNEST HOPE THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TAKE URGENT ACTION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS DECLARATIONS OF OPPOSITION TO APARTHEID, TO CALL ON THE HEINEMANN ELECTRIC COMPANY TO CEASE ITS VIOLATIONS OF THE TRADE UNION RIGHTS OF AFRICAN WORKERS, REINSTATE THE WORKERS AND PROVIDE ADEQUATE COMPENSATION.

THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE HOPES THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WILL DRAW THE ATTENTION OF ALL COMPANIES IN SOUTH AFRICA, OWNED BY UNITED STATES INTEREST, TO THE FACT THAT ANY VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHTS OF AFRICAN WORKERS, AND COLLUSION WITH THE RACIST REGIME AGAINST THE WORKERS, CANNOT BUT BE DENOUNCED BY THE UNITED NATIONS AND HUMANITY.

ACCEPT, SIR, THE ASSURANCES OF MY HIGHEST CONSIDERATION.

JEANNE MARTIN CISSE (MME)
CHAIRMAN
SPECIAL COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID

NOTE

AT HEINEMANN ELCTRIC (SA) OF ELANDSFONTEIN, NEAR JOHANNESBURG, THE 600 FRICAN WORKERS REPEATEDLY REJECTED THE GOVERNMENT-BACKED LIAISON AND WORKS COMMITTEES AND DEMANDED THE RECOGNITION OF THEIR UNION - THE METAL AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION (TRANSVAAL).

THE MANAGEMENT REFUSED TO RECOGNIZE THE UNION AND EXERTED PRESSURE ON THE WORKERS TO ELECT MEMBERS TO A LIAISON AND WORKS COMMITTEE. IN THREE BALLOTS HELD BY IT IN FEBRUARY-MARCH, NO MORE THAN 27 WORKERS COULD BE PERSUADED TO VOTE.

THE MANAGEMENT THEN DISMISSED 20 WORKERS, BELIEVED TO BE THE LEADERS OF THE TRADE UNION, ON THURSDAY, 25 MARCH. THE NEXT UNCLASSIFIED

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DAY IT GAVE NOTICE OF DISMISSAL TO THE ENTIRE WORK FORCE AND SAID IT WOULD CONSIDER RE-EMPLOYING THE WORKERS IF THEY COMPLIED WITH COMPANY REGULATIONS.

ON MONDAY, 29 MARCH, ALL BUT TEN OF THE WORKERS REFUSED TO COLLECT THEIR WAGES OR WORK, DEMANDING REINSTATEMENT. AT THE REQUEST OF THE MANAGEMENT, 40 POLICEMEN ARRIVED AT THE FACTORY AND ATTACKED THE WORKERS WHEN THEY WERE PEACEFULLY

DISPERSING.

THE RAND DAILY MAIL REPORTED:

"SUDDENLY A HORDE OF POLICEMEN WITH STICKS AND DOGS
DESCENDED ON THE CROWD. CHAOS REIGNED.

" MR. GAVIN ANDERSSON WHO HAS BEEN ACTING AS SECRETARY
OF THE WORKERS' UNION, WAS STANDING NEXT TO ME. A NUMBER OF
POLICEMEN RAINED BLOWS ON HIM. HE FELL AND COULDN'T GET UP.
HE WAS HIT AGAIN.

"HE HAD TO BE LIFTED TO HIS FEET AND HE WAS LED TO
A POLICE TRUCK.

"MEANWHILE, PEOPLE WERE FLEEING IN ALL DIRECTIONS.
POLICE HIT EVERYBODY AND EVERYTHING BEFORE THEM. REPORTERS
WERE THREATENED AND THE CAR I WAS IN WAS DENTED AFTER KICKS
AND STICKS HAD RAINED ON IT.

"SEVERAL PEOPLE WERE BITTEN BY DOGS. A WOMAN, ABOUT
SEVEN MONTHS PREGNANT, WAS STRUCK BY A POLICEMAN WIELDING A
STICK RESEMBLING A PICK HANDLE.

"SHE LAY STILL. SOME WORKERS HID IN THE BUSHES."

ACCORDING TO THE POLICE, SIX AFRICAN WORKERS - FOUR WOMEN AND
TWO MEN - WERE INJURED. PRESS REPORTS INDICATED THAT 29 HAD
BEEN INJURED.

ON 30 MARCH, FOUR WORKERS WERE CHARGED UNDER THE RIOTOUS
ASSEMBLIES ACT. MR. GAVIN ANDERSSON, WITH HIS ARM IN PLASTER,
WAS CHARGED UNDER THE RIOTOUS ASSEMBLIES ACT, AND WITH
INTERFERING WITH THE POLICE, AND RELEASED ON A BAIL OF
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200 RAND (\$230).

ON THE SAME DAY, ELEVEN BLACK TRADE UNIONS ISSUED A JOINT
STATEMENT CONDEMNING THE MANAGEMENT FOR CALLING IN THE POLICE,
INSTEAD OF FINDING A PEACEFUL WAY OF SOLVING THE DISPUTE, AND
DEPLORED THE ACTION OF THE POLICE. THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
OF THE TRADE UNION COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA DESCRIBED THE
INCIDENT AS A "MINI-SHARPEVILLE" AND CONDEMNED POLICE
VIOLENCE.

THE MANAGEMENT, HOWEVER, REFUSED TO REINSTATE THE WORKERS
AND REHIRED A FEW UNDER THE PROTECTION OF A POLICE CONTINGENT.
THREE HUNDRED WORKERS HELD A MEETING IN ALEXANDRA TOWNSHIP
AND DECIDED TO LAY CHARGES OF ASSAULT AGAINST THE POLICE.

HEINEMANN ELECTRIC (S.A.) IS OWNED BY HEINEMANN ELECTRIC COMPANY OF TRENTON, NEW JERSEY, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID CONSIDERED THE MATTER AT ITS MEETING ON 14 APRIL 1976 AND DECIDED TO WRITE URGENTLY TO THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION AND THE MAIN INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATIONS. ON THAT OCCASION, THE RAPPORTEUR OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE, MR. NICASIO G. VALDERRAMA (PHILIPPINES) SAID:

"...THIS VIOLENT ATTACK ON WORKERS IS SOMEWHAT OF A NEW DEVELOPMENT. THERE HAS BEEN , AS YOU KNOW, A SERIES OF POLICE SHOOTINGS AGAINST AFRICAN WORKERS IN THE MINES. IN THE URBAN AREAS, SINCE THE LARGE STRIKE WAVE STARTED THREE YEARS AGO, THE POLICE TRIED TO AVOID VIOLENT CONFRONTATIONS WITH THE WORKERS. INSTEAD, THE MANAGEMENTS RESORTED TO MASS FIRINGS OF WORKERS AND A LARGE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL WORKERS WERE CHARGED IN COURTS.

"THE REGIME NOW SEEMS TO HAVE DECIDED, IN VIEW OF THE INCREASING RESISTANCE OF THE WORKERS, TO RESORT TO VIOLENCE AND CREATE NEW SHARPEVILLES. IN THE PARTICULAR CASE TO WHICH I HAVE REFERRED, THE MANAGEMENT OF A FOREIGN-OWNED COMPANY WAS DIRECTLY INVOLVED.
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"URGENT ACTION MUST BE TAKEN AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL, BOTH BY TRADE UNIONS AND BY OTHER ORGANIZATIONS, TO PREVENT FURTHER VIOLENCE AND MASSACRES AGAINST AFRICAN WORKERS IN SOUTH AFRICA." UNQTE
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